



Rubens and the Archaeology of Myth, 1610-1620

Visual and Poetic Memory

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September 2009

242 pages

978-0-7546-6771-1

Includes 4 colour and 40 b&w illustrations

234 x 156 mm

Hardback

\$119.95



Focusing on four Rubens paintings created between 1610 and 1620 - Prometheus Bound, The Rape of the Daughters of Leucippus, Juno and Argus, and The Finding of Erichthonius - this book re-examines the artist's approach to classical mythology. These theoretically-informed readings provide a fuller understanding of the dynamics of Rubens's copious visual language, and can serve as methodological templates for looking at, and reading of, many other of his complex inventions.

Even by the standards of erudition commonly applied to Rubens's oeuvre as a whole, these four paintings were created during a period characterized by a particularly intense engagement on his part with questions of artistic originality and ideal style. Furthermore, the learned themes of these images clearly point to a rarefied audience that could appreciate the intertextual qualities of ancient myths. Like the artist himself, these ideal beholders cultivated a mode of viewing steeped in classical and renaissance theories of literary and rhetorical composition. Thus through these close readings, the author illuminates the manner in which the rhetorical and poetic conventions of the period, as well as the growing appreciation for the various allegorical layers of fables, lead to a better understanding of Rubens's pictorial archaeology of classical myths.

Contents

Preface; Introduction: Rubens and the historical sense of ancient myths; The revolt of the imagination and the reason of history in Prometheus Bound; The Daughters of Leucippus and the exemplarity of a rape; The Eyes of Argus and the eloquence of hieroglyphs; Erichthonius, or the serious joke of fables; Conclusion; Bibliography; Index.

About the Author

Aneta Georgievska-Shine is an independent scholar in Washington D.C., who teaches part-time in the Departments of Art History and Fine Arts at the University of Maryland, College Park. Her publications include articles in journals such as *Artibus et Historiae*, *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft*, *The Art Bulletin*, *Word and Image*, and *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek*, as well as essays in several anthologies and exhibition catalogues.

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